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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/618,785	07/14/2003	Philip D. Nguyen	201-IP-006110U1	7336

7590 03/08/2005

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EXAMINER

COLLINS, GIOVANNA M

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3672

DATE MAILED: 03/08/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/618,785	Applicant(s) NGUYEN ET AL.	
	Examiner Giovanna M. Collins	Art Unit 3672	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 July 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-32 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 and 18 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 12-17 and 19-32 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>20030714</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

1. Claims 2-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention. Claims 2-9 depend from claim 1 which recites the step of injecting an expandable member into a fracture. Claims 2 then recites the member is compress and inserted into a mass of fibrous network. As currently written, the claims appear to disclose the expander member is injected into a fracture and then compressed and inserted into a mass of fibrous network. Claim 8 further recites injecting the newly formed structure into a fracture. It is unclear at what step the expandable member is injected into the fracture.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for

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patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

1. Claims 1 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Nguyen 5,908,073.

The applied reference has a common inventor with the instant application. Based upon the earlier effective U.S. filing date of the reference, it constitutes prior art under 35 U.S.C. 102(e). This rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) might be overcome either by a showing under 37 CFR 1.132 that any invention disclosed but not claimed in the reference was derived from the inventor of this application and is thus not the invention "by another," or by an appropriate showing under 37 CFR 1.131.

Referring to claim 1, Nguyen discloses a method of forming an in-situ filter for controlling flowback of proppants injection into fracture of the formation comprising the step of injecting an expandable member into the fracture (col. 2, lines 5-8).

Referring to claim 18, Nguyen discloses a system comprises a plurality of encapsulated compressed expandable members (see fig. 3, 10) placed in a fracture.

2. Claims 1 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Nguyen 6,752,208.

The applied reference has a common inventor with the instant application. Based upon the earlier effective U.S. filing date of the reference, it constitutes prior art under 35 U.S.C. 102(e). This rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) might be overcome either by a showing under 37 CFR 1.132 that any invention disclosed but not claimed in the reference was derived from the

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inventor of this application and is thus not the invention "by another," or by an appropriate showing under 37 CFR 1.131.

Referring to claim 1, Nguyen discloses a method of forming an in-situ filter for controlling flowback of proppants injection into fracture of the formation comprising the step of injecting an expandable member into the fracture (col. 2, lines 16-25).

Referring to claim 18, Nguyen discloses a system comprises a plurality of encapsulated compressed expandable members (see figs. 3-5) placed in a fracture.

3. Claims 1 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Hussain et al. 6,528,157.

Hussain discloses a method of forming an in-situ filter for controlling flowback of proppants injection into fracture of the formation comprising the step of injecting an expandable member (fibers can expand outward) into the fracture (Fig. 1a).

Referring to claim 18, Hussain discloses a system comprises a plurality of encapsulated compressed expandable members (10) placed in a fracture.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 10-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hussain et al. '157 in view of Montgomery 6,070,666.

Hussain discloses an in situ filter for controlling flow back of proppants comprising a plurality of interspersed expandable members (10, fibers can be compressed and expand outwardly). Hussain does not disclose a network of fibrous material. Montgomery teaches using fibrous material in a fracture to prevent slumping of a proppant (col. 3, lines 47-55).

Referring to claim 11, Hussain, as modified does not disclose the fibrous network is stainless steel wool or composite fibrous sponge. However, Montgomery does disclose the fibrous can comprises metal fibers and stainless steel wool is a well known metal fiber. AS one of ordinary skill in the art would be familiar with the use of stainless steel wool, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to further modify the invention disclosed by Hussain to use stainless steel wool as suggested by Montgomery.

Allowable Subject Matter

6. Claims 12-17 and 19-32 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

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Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Giovanna M. Collins whose telephone number is 703-306-5707.

The examiner can normally be reached on 6:30-3 M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David J. Bagnell can be reached on 703-308-2151. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

gmc


David Bagnell
Supervisory Patent Examiner
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